A1 and a polarization beam splitter, depending upon grating structures thereof. Then, as to these functions, various reports have been made in which there is a small optical performance variation caused by changes in incident angles of light beams entered into this SWS grating, and the SWS grating may have optically superior features.--

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph starting at page 12, line 3 and ending at line 5. A marked-up copy of this paragraph, showing the changes made thereto is attached.

--Fig. 1 is a perspective view for representing a diffractive optical element

A2 according to an embodiment 1 of the present invention;--

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph starting at page 13, line 20 and ending at line 23. A marked-up copy of this paragraph, showing the changes made thereto is attached.

--Fig. 1 is a perspective view for indicating a diffractive optical element which

A3 performs a polarization separation operation, according to an embodiment 1 of the present invention.--

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph starting at page 13, line 24 and ending at page 14, line 1. A marked-up copy of this paragraph, showing the changes made thereto is attached.

--In the diffractive optical element 1 for performing the polarization separation operation, a diffraction grating 3 capable of performing the polarization separation operation is provided on a substrate 2.--

A4

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph starting at page 14, line 2 and ending at line 11. A marked-up copy of this paragraph, showing the changes made thereto is attached.

--The diffraction grating 3 is constituted by a one-dimensional blazed type grating shape, and has a grating period "Pt" along a direction of 2 - 2 shown in this drawing. In the diffractive optical element 1, diffraction directions of light beams incident on diffractive optical element 1 are made different from each other, depending upon polarization directions thereof. Further, this diffraction grating 3 is set in such a manner that each of polarized lights is diffracted only at a specific diffraction order.--

A5

Please substitute the following paragraph for the paragraph starting at page 15, line 19 and ending at line 27. A marked-up copy of this paragraph, showing the changes made thereto is attached.

--One the other hand, the second diffraction grating portion 5 has an SWS grating structure in which the material $n1(\lambda)$ and the material $n2(\lambda)$ are alternatively repeated with a minute period smaller than the wavelength of the light used. The grating pitch of the SWS grating is "P1", and an occupation ratio of the material $n2(\lambda)$ which is occupied within the grating pitch "P1" is equal to F = f1 / P1 (will be referred to as a "filling factor" hereinafter).--

A6